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DIE PSALMEN UND DIE SPRÜCHE SALOMOS. Von LIC. HANS KESSLER u. DR. HERMANN L. STRACK. Zweite neubearbeitete Auflage. München: Beck, 1899. Pp. xx + 302; vii + 104. M. 6.

THIS is one of the series of the Strack-Zöckler *Kurzgefasster Kommentar*. The first edition of the Psalms was prepared by F. W. Schultz. Pastor Kessler has practically rewritten the whole. He has prepared and built on a larger foundation than his predecessor. His position is that of a decided conservative, while at the same time he has due regard to modern Psalm investigations. He is unwilling to admit the Macca-bæan origin of Pss. 44, 74, 79 (p. xvii), though inclined to regard Ps. 149 as a product of that period. In contradistinction to many modern writers he is ready to assign some authoritative significance to the superscriptions, especially to לְדָוִד. The exegesis proper is, of course, very brief, but to the point. The author writes in full view of the latest Psalm literature.

Professor Strack's commentary on Proverbs is built on substantially the same subdivisions of this book as those of Frankenberg and Toy. His position also, in contrast with that of the two writers just mentioned, is preëminently conservative and traditional. On the basis of 1 Kings 5:9-13 (English version 4:29-33) Solomon is thought to be an author. This opinion is maintained for the Proverbs by the superscriptions found in 1:1; 10:1, and 25:1. The form and content are said to corroborate this position. But these statements must appear to a careful student of the Proverbs as too sweeping. Even if the Kings passage should imply authorship for Solomon, can this carry with it the certainty that he was the author of the Proverbs? What, too, can be said in this line regarding such a passage as 19:14? The narrow limits of the exegesis imposed by the purpose of the series is often aggravating. But Professor Strack has presented in small compass the latest conservative exposition of this difficult book.

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ECCLESIASTES. An Introduction to the Book; An Exegetical Analysis; and a translation with notes. By THOMAS TYLER, M.A. A new edition. London: Nutt, 1899. Pp. xi + 168. 6s., net.

THE first edition of this commentary appeared in 1874, more than a quarter of a century ago. It then excited a good deal of interest

on account of the evidence adduced proving the influence of Greek philosophy on Ecclesiastes. It was one of the pioneer volumes in putting in strong and attractive form the argument for the Greek period as the background of the book. Since that time great research has been made in the study of Ecclesiastes along the line marked out by Mr. Tyler; and, with scarcely an exception, these investigators have given credit to the original work done by our author. The volume under review is not an ordinary second edition; the work has been rewritten throughout, and many changes introduced, though there is substantial accord with what was presented in the previous edition.

There are three main divisions in the book: (1) an introduction, occupying three-fifths of the volume; (2) an exegetical analysis; and (3) a translation, with accompanying notes. It will be seen that the introduction is the principal feature of the book. The author aims, not at exposition, but at interpretation. He is more concerned in getting the historical standpoint than in the exposition of words and clauses. In the introduction he discusses such points as the character of the book, the authorship, the date, the influence of Greek philosophy, the theology, the integrity, the design, Ecclesiastes compared with Job, the Psalms, the prophetic books, etc., etc.

The date he fixes approximately as 200 B. C. His reasons for fixing on this date are well presented, his claim resting less on the linguistic test, of which so much has been made by Delitzsch and others, than on the parallelism with Greek thought. The most extended and best chapter in the book is devoted to the "Manifest Influence of Greek Philosophy." In detail he tries to parallel the teachings of the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers with passages from Ecclesiastes. He makes a remarkably strong case. The design of the book, our author says, was to dissuade others from philosophical speculation, and to recall them to the fear of God and the observance of the law. He makes 12:8-14 to be an original part of the book. Speaking of the integrity of the book, he says: "I see no reason to doubt that we have it, at least substantially, as it came from the author's hands;" and "I see no valid reason whatever for the unrestrained employment of critical conjecture, or for the supposition that there are several lacunæ, as well as dislocations requiring to be rectified. The notion of an exceedingly corrupt text may well be looked upon as an endeavor to 'cut the knot' in the case of a confessedly difficult and enigmatical book." Not many will follow the author in his assignment of date and in some other points, but all will agree that the book is a strong one, and

second only to the "Cambridge Bible" on Ecclesiastes in its value for a comprehension of all the problems connected with the study of this difficult book of wisdom.

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RHYTHMUS, METRIK UND STROPHIK IN DER BIBLISCH-HEBRÄISCHEN POESIE. Systematisch dargestellt von DR. JOH. DÖLLER, Professor der orientalischen Sprachen am Priesterseminar zu St. Pölten. Mit Approbation des hochw. bischöflichen Ordinariates St. Pölten. Paderborn: Druck und Verlag von Ferdinand Schöningh, 1899. Pp. vii + 100. M. 2.40.

THIS book contains an essay submitted in a prize competition, on a subject chosen by the theological faculty of the university of Vienna. The subject really included two things: the explanation of passages in ancient writers, especially church fathers, speaking of rhythm, meter, etc., in Old Testament poetry; and the discussion of modern views, beginning with the seventeenth century, concerning the same matter.

The book is, of course, not designed to be strictly popular, but yet it is not needlessly technical. The author writes clearly and concisely, and shows great skill in condensing the views of the writers concerning whom he speaks. It shows evidence of a wide and diligent investigation, which is worthy of high commendation. It will be found by many to be invaluable as a summary of the chief views which have been held concerning the form of Old Testament poetry.

Yet, good as the book is, it might easily have been better. Its importance is in the material it contains, not in the views it expresses. The latter are largely negative, contain nothing really new, and are not entirely supported by the evidence. The author's reasons for thinking that the existence of meter in the Old Testament not simply has not been proven, but never will be, are especially weak.

A better sense of proportion in the treatment would have made the book of far greater value to most students. Too much space is given to the opinions of the church fathers and of the writers of the seventeenth century, which is the least valuable part of the material. This disproportion is not entirely due to the subject assigned. The space occupied with the church fathers is largely a result of the author's evidently high estimate of the importance of their opinions on this point, an estimate which many would not share. Some of the